

Amusements

AT THE THEATRES.
Academy of Music.
 Tuesday, Wednesday and Wednesday matinee, "The Girl Question."
 Thursday night and Friday matinee, James K. Hackett, in "The Prisoner of Zenda."
 Friday night, James K. Hackett, in "The Crisis."
 Saturday matinee and night, May Robson, in "The Rejuvenation of Aunt Mary."
Bijou Theatre.
 "Too Many Wives."
Colonial Theatre.
 Pictures and Vaudeville.
Majestic Theatre.
 Vaudeville.

"The Girl Question."
 Fresh and pretty, funny and tuneful, snappy and dashing, the new musical play, "The Girl Question," which the Academy of Music on December 1st and 2d with a matinee on Wednesday, is beyond all question the best of the series of La Salle Theatre productions, including "The Time, The Place and The Girl," "The Umpire," and a half-dozen other record-breaking successes.

The characters in "The Girl Question" are everyday men and women, who are pictured with such fidelity to life, who are so natural and so human that they create an instant sympathy with an audience, which makes them appreciative and absorbingly interested from the rise to the fall of the curtain.

Like "The Time, The Place and The Girl," the book and lyrics of "The Girl Question" were written by Frank Adams and Will Hough, and the music by Joseph E. Howard.

The jokes are keenly witty and original, the situations funny, and though at moments there is a dramatic situation or a tenderly pathetic line, which generally seems incongruous or bordering on the melodramatic in a musical comedy, they are introduced here with a tact and deftness which only heightens their enjoyment, as a contrast to the fun of a moment before. Another merit of the play is that it is absolutely clean. There is not a suggestive line or scene in the play, and if "The Girl Question" is a question of girls its rating must be A. A. A. L. For its prettier, more youthful or merrier chorus was ever assembled. The six girls are regally beautiful, yet have no lack of animation, while the little "broilers" are childishly eager and happy in their delightful dances. Ned Wayburn staged the production, and his name is synonymous with striking originality, grace and action.

The first act is laid in a Chicago restaurant, where "Con" Ryan, a slippy, illiterate, but "on the level" product of the under-world, is manager. He is in love with a pretty little girl, who acts as cashier, but who is too young and frivolous to appreciate his devotion. The head waitress, "the best and truest pal a fellow ever had," is in love with him. The restaurant is frequented by a conglomerate crowd, who range in social position from "Skinny" Jones, the president of the Iron Workers' Union,



GIRLS IN "GIRL QUESTION."

to T. P. G. Sears, a millionaire, who owns pretty near all of Chicago and the rest of the United States. Ryan is given an interest in the business, and, to celebrate, determines to propose to the cashier and give a ball, and asks the head waitress to help him do both properly.

Baron von Tesmer, a young German, who has come to America in search of the rightful owner of a block of railroad stock, which has been left in his trust for a girl named Foster, discovers that the owner is the head waitress, just as a deputy sheriff rushes in, declares that Mr. Sears has foreclosed a mortgage he holds on Ryan's restaurant, and that it is to be thrown into the street, and the act ends in a scene of glorious confusion.

In the third act the waitress, transformed into Mr. Sears's private secretary, discovers that her block of railroad securities forms the balance of power which Sears must acquire to carry out a vast deal. She sells to him on condition that he restore Ryan's old restaurant to its former condition and lease it to him, rent free, for three years, puts Ryan in charge, and makes him acknowledge that his infatuation for the cashier was only a moment's passing fancy, and that she was the girl he really and truly loved.

Paul Nicholson plays "Con" Ryan; Henrietta Tedro, Jo Foster, the head

waitress; Margaret de Von, Elsie Davis, the cashier; Lewis Wood, Mr. Sears, the magnate; Nina Collins, formerly his typewriter, but now his wife, who holds records for talking, as well as typewriting, while the chorus numbers sixty.

Hackett in Two Plays.
 That the romantic drama is far from dead is evidenced by the success James K. Hackett has met with this year in "The Prisoner of Zenda." It will be remembered that this play was one of the greatest successes of a decade ago. It is thought that in



MAY ROBSON AND JACK STOREY.

this day of serious and ethical plays, there is still a large audience who will welcome this classic of the romantic stage. It is a stirring drama without a moment's dullness, and the good old-fashioned love story, which seems to have gotten into disrepute, is to be found here in all its strength.

It is hardly necessary to recall the story of "The Prisoner of Zenda," which enjoyed a vogue that few English novels had, and was the beginning of the romantic movement in this country and England. Combining the dash and vigor of the romance of Alexander Dumas with the lightness of touch and humor that belongs to our own day, Mr. Hackett created a hero in Rensselaer that will undoubtedly live for a long time.

Mr. Hackett has gathered about him as many of the original cast as it has been possible, and the production, it is said, will be one of unusual excellence. Mr. Hackett will be seen at the Academy in "The Prisoner of Zenda" on Thursday night and Friday matinee, and by request, in his famous character of Stephen Brice in Churchill's "The Crisis," on Friday night. This will be the first time this beautiful romantic play of love and war has been presented in Richmond.

Miss Stokes's Clever Play.
 "Standing like an oasis in a desert of poverty and weary plays, 'The Rejuvenation of Aunt Mary,' as presented at the Grand last night, with May Robson in the title role, will be held by many as the best comedy seen here this year. This statement, while it may seem extravagant, is entertained by the audience which greeted the opening performance. To miss this play is to miss one of those rare and delightful treats which come but seldom in a theatrical season.

Devoid of all problems, suggestion or coarseness, the play is one of sweet simplicity. It is refreshing from the rise to the fall of the curtain. There is truly a laugh in every line and a smile in every action. In "The Rejuvenation of Aunt Mary" Atlanta saw the original Broadway cast with all of its atmosphere and stage mountings.

The play is from the pen of that talented magazine writer, Anne Warner, and the woman has given to the stage a creation which has proven a panacea for the blues, and affords a

most delightful evening.

"Space forbids an extended review of the play. Suffice to say that the story deals with an old maid aunt, not the crabbed sort, but a sweet, motherly woman whom country life has made sharp. A visit to the city and a taste of high life with her nephew, whom she had disowned for his escapades, shows her what life really is and rejuvenates her; makes her young in spirit as she really is in years, and brings about a happy ending to all of their lives.

"Clear cut as a cameo is the wit. The audience, when not in a titter of suppressed laughter, is bolstered in its applause. There is blended a touch of pathos, just enough to tighten the tension and allow a fuller and free relaxation at the next bit of humor. There was more genuine, sincere and spontaneous laughter in the lines of that show than any half-dozen comedies that have preceded it or will succeed it. And it was not all lines, either. There was character work that told the story when not a word was spoken.

"For facial expression it is doubtful if Miss Robson has a superior. The play is the thing admitted, but it takes splendid acting to make the sayings and situations ring true, and this was done.

"To praise the favorites would be to print the program. Without being claimed or advertised as an 'all-star cast,' the supporting company, without exception, seemed to live rather than act the sweetest, simplest play of the season. In Jack Storey, as John Watkins, Jr., Deham, Jack, the college nephew of manifold scrapes, Miss Robson has a supporting lead who is excellent. His piano work and singing were both exquisite, and gave an added charm. His college chum, Clover, Walter Poulter, Bob Burnett, Francis Herblin, Mitchell, Paul Deckeske, there was assembled a trio of collegians who gave the play a dash of New York town, and pleased excellently. The character work of Nina Saville as Lucinda was good, as was that of the other character part. The rest of the cast was in full keeping with the leads. One of the brightest lines of the play was the last, 'The Lord intended all of us to be happy, but some of us don't know how to go about it.'"

"Too Many Wives" at Bijou.
 The Bijou Theatre offers for the coming week a light and breezy musical comedy, entitled "Too Many Wives." The book and lyrics are by Charles Horwitz, and Frederick V. Bowers, whose songs, "Because" and "Always" are world-famous, has supplied some new and original musical numbers. The story is so written that situation follows each other in rapid succession, keeping fast and furious fun rampant, compelling interest throughout the action of the play.

It admits of numerous clever specialties, and the tuneful chorus ensembles contribute to the success of the entertainment. A wealthy merchant, Isidore Meyer, of Kansas City, has been supplanted by a nephew residing in New York City, and the nephew, to the action of the play, deciding that sufficient time has elapsed for the young man to marry and settle down, refuses him to marry and settle down, refusal meaning a disinheritance of income. Nephew Jack is not just ready to make the plunge, and, believing that distance will prevent the uncle from

learning the truth, writes that he is already married, and hints that a large check will be exceedingly welcome.

The money arrives, unexpectedly followed by the uncle, who has planned to give the young folks a pleasant surprise. Jack is at his wits' end, but his chum, Bob Lester, comes to the rescue. He places his house at Jack's disposal and endeavors to obtain the consent of one of the ladies of the house party to pass as Jack's wife temporarily.

The second act keeps Jack busy making explanations and straightening

a blackface comedian's offering. Russell is a tried and true entertainer, with an act that abounds in comedy and genuine melody. The great feature of the vaudeville program promises to be that offered by Devine and Van Cott. They are two singing stars that the vaudeville agents have picked from the musical comedy field and



MAY ROBSON, Academy.

out the various entanglements that are constantly occurring, until finally, in desperation, he is forced to confess. Uncle Isidore picks out a wife for Jack and announces his departure for the West.

Joe Morris cleverly portrays the role of Uncle Isidore, and is supported by an excellent company of farceurs. The place is handsomely mounted and exquisitely costumed, and boasts of a large chorus of pretty girls.

New Bill at Colonial.
 For the week beginning to-morrow another big program has been arranged for the Colonial that bids fair to quite equal in point of quality the one just ended. For the vaudeville features alone three star acts have been engaged, the first being the charming comedienne, Mary Minnie Stokes, Miss Stokes comes to the Colonial direct from New York City, in and around which most of her performances have been given. Fred Russell will present



JOE MORRIS, With "Too Many Wives," at the Bijou.

NEW MOVING PICTURE HALL.
 The Hart Bros., former proprietors of the Wonderland and Majestic Theatres of this city, will leave Wednesday for Richmond, Va., where they will fill an engagement. On their trip they will spend a few days at Pittsburgh and Washington, D. C. They will furnish music for the opening of the "Rex," a fine new picture theatre at Richmond, owned by Mrs. A. E. Thorpe, the former proprietor of the Wonderland in this city. Mrs. Thorpe conducts two moving picture theatres at Richmond.

The Rex, which she opens December 1st, is situated in the heart of Richmond, and the Harts have been engaged to furnish music for the opening, which promises to be a brilliant affair. The Harts have engaged a manager to take charge of their Marion theatre during their absence. Mrs. Thorpe is to be congratulated on being able to secure the Harts for the opening night of her new theatre, and her many buoyant friends wish her success in her enterprise at Richmond.

Mrs. E. A. Thorpe will soon open up at Seventh and Broad a show-house known as the Rex, and will give high-class moving pictures and illustrated songs. Admission 5 cents. Mrs. Thorpe is now conducting the Dixie, corner Brook Avenue and Broad.

given opportunity to display their talents where they will have a chance to be recognized, rather than to be swallowed up in chorus work.

For the illustrated song section, Joe Romain has fitted himself with two of the newest and cleverest song successes of the present year. They are of unmistakable quality, and will assure to him a further growth in the popularity of the Colonial patrons.

At the Majestic.
 The Majestic Theatre has just closed the largest week ever in the history of that popular house, playing to over 8,000 people during the past six days. Manager Kahn states that he expects to do even better this week with the big double bill he puts on to-morrow, including the Four Lubins introducing a terpsichorean novelty, entitled "Uncle Ben's Birthday"; Lafferty, "The Frog Man," the wonder of the nineteenth century; Frank Barrett, an eccentric comedian and vocalist, one of the big hits, with Conover's minstrels, combining one of the cleverest and best vaudeville bills ever produced for the money. This bill will wind up with the Majestic orchestra and the best moving pictures shown in Richmond.

MIL RICHARD BENNETT.

Popular and Finished Actor Makes Hit as Maude Adams's Leading Man.

In a recent criticism of "What Every Woman Knows," in which Miss Maude Adams is starring, the following appears regarding Mr. Richard Bennett, one of the greatest favorites that ever played before Richmond audiences:

"It likewise is contended that no better, more convincing work in sustained characterization has been accomplished on the American stage in the comedy-drama field than the performance of Richard Bennett in this same play. To grasp a character firmly, to sound its obvious depth, is one thing; to go deeper than that, to uncover characteristics of essentially greater importance and truth, and then to hold what is found, and to score with each point gained from the deduction, is another thing, and the thing that in reality tests the actor, how high his craft. With Shand, Bennett has done this. In attitude, gesture, facial expression, he has caught him, and perfectly he projects him. Mr. Bennett deserves all the praise that is accorded him. His art will carry him to the highest places in his profession."

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...The...

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In her 465 consecutive performances in the charming comedy.

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"A laugh every minute."—New York Herald.

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"May Robson is a comedy delight."—San Francisco Chronicle.

"Clear cut as a cameo is the wit."—Edgar E. Dallas, Atlanta Constitution.

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IN THE MILE-A-MINUTE
 MUSICAL COMEDY.

Too Many Wives

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"THE GREAT TERPSICHOOREAN SENSATION."
 LA MANOLITA AND HER BALLETT OF 12 GIRLS IN
 THE DANCE OF THE BELLS.
 LA MANOLITA AS "SNOW."



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